THE

YOVNG-MANS Warning-peece:

OR,

A Sermon preached at the buriall of WILLIAM ROGERS *Apothecary*.

With an Hiſtory of his ſinfull Life, and *wofull Death*.

Together with a Poſt-ſcript of the uſe of Examples.

Dedicated to the Young-men of the Pariſh, eſpecially to his Companions.

By *Robert Abbot*, Vicar of *Cranebrooke* in KENT.

Prov. 7. 23. The young Foole, *as a Bird, haſteneth to the ſnare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.*

LONDON,
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1639

YOUNG-MAN'S
Warning-piece:

A Sermon preached at Chelmsford
of WILLIAM ROGERS,
Together
With an History of his mortal Life, and
untimely Death.

Together with a Poll-dirge of the
like Example.

Dedicated to the Young-men of this
Town, especially to the Inquarers.

By Nehemiah Wallington, Vicar of Chelmsford.

Printed by R. B. for P. Stephens and
C. Meredith, and are to be sold at their
shop at the Gilded Lion in

1628.

To all the Young-men of my Parish, especially to late Companions of

William Rogers,

Apothecary, *Grace*, *Mercy*, and *Peace*.

Dearely beloved Young-men, that this Sermon (in effect) was preached by mee among you, you know; and the occasion you know too. When I preach'd it, it came to your eares, & it wrought something in some of your eyes, but I little thought

to have presented it to your eyes againe. Importunities from abroad, and at home, have pressed mee to make this adventure. And now it is come, to whom should it come, but unto you? It is true, my love to that dead Young-man, made me willing to satisfie his desire: and your desires to have it, have not made mee willing thus to send it unto you. Yet your courses being the occasion of it, and your welfare being the end of it; you may justly chalenge it, and shall not by mee bee robbed of your right. Who knowes whether God may leave a blessing behind? I cannot bee assured, that, for the

word of God handled in it, or for me the poore instrument that is used in it, ye will make much use of it for your good; because (I feare) ye so often prefer an ale-house before the house of God. It may be, ye had rather be without it, than have it; because the sight of it, to you, will be a sting; the sight of it, to others, will bee but a remembrancer to them, to call upon you still to forsake those courses which ye love. Yet herein have I hope, that you will love to see the picture of him being dead, whom yee loved and followed as your Doctor while he lived. If it be not drawne to life, my eyes,

eares, and understanding much faile me; besides, many witnesses will not faile to say, that all is true. I am sure, it is so for substance: and if it be coloured otherwise, even as the first it was rudely drawne, it is for your sakes, that you may still see him the more perfectly, and know your owne estate.

You have had (in your daies) many examples, teaching, that there is no bargaine to be had in a wicked way; it is folly to lay out your silver, and not for bread. But to have two in one yeere, layes the axe to the root of the trees of the Wood, and preacheth, that except ye amend, *ye shall*

likewise perish. Yee have seene two Apothecaries different in their course. The one so many wayes looking home-ward, that he *died miserably rich*; the other so lashing outward, that hee dyed miserably poore. Both of sweet and mild natures, and of different waies in life: yet both *of uncomfortable passages out of the world.* The one having first the devill presenting himselfe unto him to be his Physitian: and next CHRIST sitting on the Throne, condemning his unprofitable life, and bidding him shift for himselfe, for he would have nothing to do with him. The other, as if hee would prevent

Not onely as they but worse.

So he was accounted of all about us some years before he dyed.

So may a good man have, by some distemper or over-powring temptation, to lash some sin for the example of others.

Christ, condemning himselfe to hell for ever, and ever. The one (being very rich, and having no children) was pressed by me, *while hee was in peace, and before his last Will was settled*, of his thousands to give but one hundred pounds, for the repairing of the Church, or other pious workes. But if hee were worth ten thousand (as he said) he would not give a penny, beside what he had given by will; that is, twenty Marks to the poor, ten pounds to me, and some other petty Legacies. If I were rich, I should be loth *to pay so deare* for such a doyall, as he did in the end, full of horror to the last.

I meane an uncomfortable death, not judging his eternall estate.

The

The other (being very poore) was preſſed by me againe and againe, *but to beleeve in Chriſt for ſalvation.* But I could not (for ought I ſaw) prevaile neither. The one had lived well, except his miſery: the other had lived ill, and ſo in miſery worſe. I know you feare not the danger of the firſt example: for you are out of the way of being too rich. If you have enough to goe like gallant Blades, it is all you deſire: yet if you have not, your credite muſt bee good till the quarter day, or the good market comes. But may you not feare the danger of the ſecond? Him ye loved enough, his courſes

yee love too well. The Ale-house must bee your Chappell, Kitchin, Work-house: the first draught is your prayer, the next your breakfast, and the last your worke. Yet if ye had but a Priest that would prophecy of Wine and strong drinke, and say, Come let us fill our selves with Wine and strong drinke, to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abouldant, hee were the only man, and you the only people of the world. I know you think your selv's very familiar with Christ, as if hee would passe by these slips of youth, and imbrace you in the armes of his mercy upon the least

call

call. But you forget that *Christ* hath now taken state upon him. He was an Infant crying in the Cratch, and then he was circumcised by wicked Priests, carried by an Asse into Ierusalem, Hee was a Preacher in *Israel*, and then he was pressed upon by all, and sought to be intangled by his enemies. Hee was a worker of miracles here, and then sicke soules and bodies troubled him. He was under arrests and executions, and then *Iudas* did kisse, Souldiers buffered and spit upon him, and *Rebels* and *Gentiles* killed him. But now the case is altered, his present state admits no such neere ap-

proach.

proach. Will you say hee is my sweet Saviour still? Go then and tell him so: say; Lord, I am idle, unprofitable, and luxurious, but thou art my sweet Saviour still. Say yee to your fathers and mothers, I am drunken, idle, wanton, rebellious, but ye are my father and mother still, and I expect your blessing, and your purse. Surely such proud and dissolute carriage shall a thousand times sooner please men on earth, than it shall please Christ in heaven. He hath redeemd you that ye might serve him in righteousnesse and holines all the daies of your life. He hath bought you with a price, that yee might

might glorifie God in body and soule, and (by the grace of God) save your selves from the midst of this wicked generation wherein ye live. Perhaps you may think your sinnes not to be so great, but that you may keep your fellowship in the salvation of Christ too. But they are not worthy of pity who wilfully deceive their own soules. For in foure cases your least sins prove damnable in the issue. If they be committed against your consciences. Conscience is in Gods roome to guard you, and if that be affronted, it is given to God, and so you build downeward to hell. Then if they bee com-

committed with pleasure and delight; there is no sin so small, which smels not unsavorily if it pleaseth. It pleased the man to gather
3. sticks, and he died for it. It pleased *Lots* Wife to look backe, and she was turned into a pillar of Salt. Next, if small sins dispose you to greater. For he that hath avoided the great Rockes, may be swallow'd up in the sand: and he that can keep out great Theeves, may
2 have his house opened by a little Boy who creeps in at
4. the window. Lastly, if the smallest sinnes have a progresse, and go on. A little ball of snow rowled, is increased, and many drops make a floud. Can you say

that

that you sin not when conscience checks, and saith, Doe it not? Or that you have not taken pleasure in what you have done? Or that you have not bin disposed by your houres of error, to scandalize others, and neglect God and his worship? Or that your little sins have not multiplyed so long, as that they may (for any thing you are sure to the contrary) become an Ocean to drowne your soules in eternall horror? What now is to bee done, but that you see your wickednesse, and amend all? I am sure it would bring comfort to your friends, to see you in the way to Heaven. I am more

sure

sure it would bring glory to God, and honour to the Gospell, to have his creatures and the professors of it from your youth, to live in the obedience of faith. And I know assuredly too, that it shall adde to my crowne of rejoycing, to see all, Christs Lambs, Babes, and Children to walke in that truth which is according to godlinesse. Vp and be doing, and the God of Heaven be with you. There is no delay, must have place now. It is enough (yea too much) that yee have spent the time past after the course of the wicked world. God hath held his peace, and not unsheathed his sword, and you have

lived

lived as if God were a favourer of sinne. But hath he not now begun to strik? Hath hee not let you see that there is no peace to the wicked? If ye yet goe on, yee kicke against the pricks. If ye come in with bleeding soules: behold your blessed Saviour hanged on the crosse; he bowed his head, as if he meant to kisse you; he stretched out his armes, as if hee meant to imbrace you; and his blessed side was broached, as if he meant that even you should drinke his bloud, to pacifie your souls against conscience of wrath, and his water to purifie your bodies and soules from the dominion

of

of all uncleanneſſe. Will you yet neglect ſo great ſalvation? My ſoule ſhall weepe for you in ſecret. Yet that there may not be a cauſe, I hope that you will reade this that I preſent unto you, and ſo make a ſtand. I hope you will pray to God that the cauſe may have acceſſe unto your hearts, and ſo make an entrance into the good way. And I hope that being entred, you will continue to the end; and then as Saint *Paul* of his *Theſſalonians*, ſo I of you; Now I live if ye ſtand faſt in the Lord. Even I, who have bin often grieved by you, and have often prayed for you with groanes and

ſighs

sighs, but now hope to be comforted in my bowels over you, upon your amendment; and ever after to continue.

Your Pastour rejoycing in the conversion of such sinners,

Robert Abbot.

Your Labour rejoicing
in the conversion of
such sinners,

[redacted]

Robert Abbot.

THE YOVNGMANS Warning-peece.

OR,

A SERMON Preached at the Buryall of *William Rogers*,

upon Prov. 4. 19.

The way of the wicked is as darkneſſe, they know not at whats they ſtumble.

WE know my life. As *Laban* ſaid to *Jacob* in caſe of marriage, *It muſt not be ſo done in our place*: ſo ſay I, Itis not my cuſtom on funerall occaſions, to weare out the time upon the dead. Though Gen. 29. 26

2 Sam. 1. 19,20,&c.

I grudge not *Davids* mournfull Ditty at the death of *Saul*; nor *Jeremies* Lamentations over *Jerusalem*, for the untimely death of *Josiah*; nor

Act. 9. 39.

the shewing of *Dorcas* her Coates, given to the poore Saints at her buryall, (*for ordinarily, those that deserve no praise themselves, love to give none to others:*) yet Saint *Augustine* hath said it, that these solemnities are rather the comfort of the living, than the helpe of the dead; and I have beene willing to follow this rule, in ordinary cases. Yet now the case is altred. I have something to say to the person, before I speake to the Text. I am intreated, earnestly intreated, by the miserable young man who lies dead at our feet, to Preach to all the Young men of the Parish, especially to his wicked companions (*as hee called them*)

Magis vivorum solatia quam mortuorum subsidia.

some-

something at his buryall, to warne them, by his example, to take a better course, *that they bee not burned in hell with him for ever and ever.*

This I cannot doe, except I first tell you his example. Heare, therefore, that first, and God open your eyes to see the danger. I call him a miserable Young man, not in respect of the devouring judgement of God upon him for ever: for we have nothing to say to that. What are wee that we should sit in God's chaire? He did rise and fall to his owne Master, whose judgments are alwaies just, often secret, and to Him we leave him, with feare and trembling, though not without some hope. For as hee was in his generall course a man of a sweet and pleasing temper, it beginning to grow proverbiall, *That the Divell never abu-*

This yong man is called miserable.

Not in respect of Godsjudgment final.

For from him are many arguments of hope.

sed

sed a better nature; And as he was observed (so farre as I know or have heard) never to sweare or curse, in all his life, till one curse dropped from him in a distempered fit the night before he died: and alwayes to carry himselfe in words inoffensively to all; except only once to my selfe, and another who had strugled with him from time to time, to *pull him out of the snares of Satan*; for which yet he was wounded in soule in his sicknesse, *and asked forgivenesse*: So, for his worst part, how freely did hee confesse his sinnes? how earnest were his desires, *that he might live but a Yeare, or a Moneth, that he might manifest to the world the Truth of his heart, in his promises to* GOD, *for amendment of Life*? How carefull was he to warne his companions, or at least, to wish that

2 Tim. 2. 16.

they

they were by him, that hee might warne them, that they might not bee burned in the furnace of Hell, whither hee (said he) was going: These things in him, give advantage in us, to some charitable hope, that it may be better with him in the issue, than God would let us see. Though God would not let us see one drop of peace to fall downe upon him to his last gaspe, was it not rather to bridle our presumption, and to make us to runne from the stinking dens of sinne, than to settle our judgements about his finall estate, which is farre out of our reach? Though we could not see that hee *apprehended* CHRIST IESVS might he not *bee apprehended of* CHRIST IESVS? Though we could not perceive *that he knew* GOD *to love* (to comfort) *us, might he not be known of God?* Therefore have nothing to

Phil. 3. 12.

Gal. 3. 9.

doe with Gods finall judgement upon him; it must be put over to the highest tribunall, to declare him miserable before the God of Heaven.

Neither doe I call him miserable in respect of his repute amongst men. He was loved of all that knew him, hated of none, and desired of all that stood in need of his skill or practice. Ye know that he was an Apothecary, and practised both Chirurgery and Physicke. How successefull hee was, where he would shew care and diligence, you know too. As hee had put himselfe to it to gaine some skill by his own industry, and by conference and complying with the learned in that Science, and with all famous practitioners where he came: so was hee renounced to the heights of fame, sought to

farre and nigh was he. The ſober ſought unto him, becauſe of his ſweet temper ſeaſoned with ſucceſſefull skill. The looſe ſought to him, becauſe of his prodigall and bibbing courſe. The thriftie ſought to him, becauſe of his gentle rates upon his care and cures. He would not ſuffer them to *ſpend all they had upon Phyſitians*. Mar. 5. 26. And the covetous ſought to him, becauſe of ſomthing pleaſed them not, he would (for the moſt part) take nothing for what he did. He would confeſſe, that he could by his practice get an hundred pounds a yeare, and ſpend an hundred pounds a yeare: yet he ſold his owne inheritance, and ſpent it; and did ſo exceed in laviſhing, that hee ſcarce left enough to defray the charges of his owne buriall. Some ſought to him for one cauſe, ſome for ano-

ther; so that as one was called for grace, he might be so called for place and practise, *Luke the beloved Physician.* Therefore he was not miserable in the eyes of men.

Col. 4. 14.

But in respect of his own feeling.

Yet I call him a miserable young man in respect of his own feeling & apprehension. To present this I shall shew you the ground, and his opening of it. The ground of it was thus laid; He had bin religiously trained in his childhood. Few youths with me would *have given a better reason of the hope that is in them.*

1 Pet. 3. 15. This had a deepe ground.

He had also lived in a civill way, till he beganne to looke out into the World for him self. When hee had some few moneths beene seasoned with the flatteries of his followers, and, (alwayes leading a batchelours life) being used to make up some of his connections at an Ale-

house

house fire: the fire of the High Priests Hall was not more banefull to *Peter* (save in the height of *Peters* present sinne) than this was to this poore Young mans soule. First, delight in vaine company crept upon him, next drunkennesse, next neglect of Prayer, Word and Sacraments; and lastly a setled obstinacy in these sinnefull and bewitching courses. I, willing to performe the dutie of a Shepheard, and friend, timely fastened my eyes and heart upon it. I went to him, and warned him againe and againe. I told him what fearefull worke hee made, in suffering the Wild Boare to come in, to lay waste his former Conscience. He would still answer mildely, *Indeed I will doe otherwise.* I had so often pressed him to amendment with so little successe, that he

grew weary of it, and mee. He utterly avoyded my company: if I had come in at one doore, he would have gone out at another. He hath many times professed, *that hee could not abide to see mee, or bee in my company: not because he hated mee (for hee would doe any thing for mee with all his heart) but because I still told him of his bad life, and hee could not amend yet.*

In this state he stood one, or two yeares, or more. At last, as one cloathed with the scales of a Leviathan, hee kicked against the prickes, and contrary to all admonitions (against which custome in sinne had now armed him) he wilfully forsooke the Church, together with Prayers, Word, Sacraments. Thus hee continued about a yeare and three quarters. In this space (as I could slide into his company,

or

or as he fell into mine) I admonished him still, wished him to beware lest the just sentence of GOD went not out against him, *that he should never see* GODS *face in the congregation more*: I told him that he trusted his flatterers and drunken companions, more than mee, who loved his soule: and yet withall, that I would proceed against him by Articles and Presentments, which would end in excommunication, which was a forerunner of GODS shutting him out of Heaven, without his willing and hearty Repentance. He answered mildly still, *that hee would come to the Church, receive the Sacrament, and change his course.* He gave mee day, and day, and day, and yet his place was empty. Vpon some of the promised dayes of appearance, I sent secretly to

his house, to call upon him to be as good as his word: he would make some idle excuse or other, and so still persisted. At the length, the Church Officers presented him for his neglect of the Church, and Sacrament, an whole yeare. Halfe a yeare after they presented him againe, for his neglect a yeare and a halfe. In this time I still told him what was done, which yet (said I) shall easily be taken off with an admonition, if you will reforme. Hee still mildly promised amendment. At last, acited he was to answer; and hee knew that I had personally appeared against him to the Judge of the spirituall Court: for I told him so, (as I remember;) and that it would not bee so easie for him to get off without mee. Hereupon he was more hearty

(as

(as I thought) to come to the house of GOD againe, and he set his utmost day, and yet hee failed. At my instance, and fearing the dreadfull sentence of excommunication, which now (after his many shifts) was thundering out upon him, hee peremptorily set another day, which was the LORDS-Day sevennight after, and a Communion Day. Then he resolved to come to the Church, and to receive the Sacrament, to give satisfaction to the Parish and Court, and in the meane time to prepare himselfe. Christmasseday. 1635.

The Lords-Day before this, in the morning, when (as he said) hee was ready to come to the Church, hee was taken sicke, and betooke himselfe to his bed. It was but as the fit of an Ague, which being over, hee was the next morning

in his old course againe. About the middle of the weeke after the messenger of death came, and I heard of it. I forthwith addressed my selfe to him, came up into his chamber unawares, and said, *Oh, how often have you deceived God, your owne soule, and mee! what is now to bee done? I feare you will die, and then what will become of you? I expect your excommunication, and then you will bee cut off from the Church of* GOD *by Iustice, which you have cut your selfe from by wantonnesse.* Hee answered, hee had but a fit of cold: and, if I would be pleased but to write to the Court, to suspend the sending forth of his excommunication till the Court day following, he would the next Lords-Day come to the Church, and receive the Sacrament, and then goe up with my Certificate,

and

and satisfie the Court. I did it, and prevailed; but his sicknesse prevailed that Thursday, Friday, and Saturday upon him. It had emptied him of hope of life: and no hope of life had filled him with thoughts of this present guilt, and future judgement before that great God who is a consuming fire.

And next his owne apprehension upon it.

Now therefore, you, having the ground of the apprehension of his owne miserie, shall see how hee opened it, and made it knowne both to me and others. There was too great a fire within to bee smothered: it burned in his owne soule, and lighted from his heart and lippes, into the eares, and hearts, of those friends that were about him.

Manifested by many fearefull speeches.

One while he cries out of his sinnes, I have beene a fearefull drunkard, *powring in one draught after another*, till

till one draught could not keepe downe another; and now I would be glad if I could take the least of GODS Creatures which I have abused. *I have neglected my Patients, who have put their lives into my hands, and how many soules have I thus murthered?* I have wilfully neglected Gods House, service, and worship, and now though I have purposed, *God strikes me thus, before the day of my promise comes; because I am unworthy to come among Gods people againe.*

Another while hee falls to wishing, *O that I might burne along time in that fire,* (*pointing to the fire before him,*) *so I might not burne in Hell!* Oh that GOD would grant me to live but one yeare, or but a moneth, that the world might see with what an heart I have promised to GOD my amendment! Oh that GOD would

would [illegible] a little; but I am unworthy [illegible]

Another while he plyes his companions, praying that all may be warned by him to forsake their wicked wayes, lest they goe to hell as he must do. He forgat not his servant who was young: He calls him to him, tells him that he had bin a wicked master to him; but be warned by me. You have a friend that hath an Iron furnace which burnes hot, a long time: *but if you give your selfe to my sinnes, you shall be burned in that furnace of Hell, an hotter furnace, millions of millions of ages.* Therefore looke to your selfe, and be warned by my (your Masters) example, who must bee burned in hell for ever. [illegible] Lastly, all his broyles against him (to this feeling) would not sufficiently set forth his estate, nor all this I wisher,

nor

And plaine judgments against himselfe.

not all his warning of others: but he comes to a plaine judgment, and condemnation, and leaves nothing for after times, but execution. Hence againe and againe hee doubles it; *I have had a little pleasure, and now I must goe to the torments of Hell for ever.* And having sometimes (being prest by others) prayed to God that hee would forgive his sinnes, and have mercy upon him: hee would adde, *but I know GOD will not doe it, I must goe to Hell for evermore.* Whatsoever came between whiles, this was the close, *I must be burned in Hell, I must be a firebrand of Hell, millions of millions of ages.*

Thus hee fearefully wearyed out the most part of Saturday, both day and night. Early on the Lords-day (that day appointed) I went to him againe. I found him deepely

mudded

mudded in horrour and perplexity. I asked him then whether some great sinne (not yet thought of) did not lye behind, to hinder the beames of Gods sweet grace from shining upon him? And because he was suspected of whoredome, and using cruell meanes for the covering of it, I layed it befor him, and asked him in the sight of GOD, and his owne Conscience now, whether he were not guilty? He constantly denyed it both to mee, and three godly friends before, severally: and therefore I heartily believe him to be not guilty: especially hee constantly professing it when his Conscience was most active and nimble. I then began againe to offer unto him the comforts of the Gospell. I opened to him the promises of the largest size. I shewed him that GOD was delighted

to

to save soules, and not to destroy them: and that his sweet promises were without exception of time, place, person, or sin, except that against the Holy Ghost, which I assured him, was not committed by him.

All this could not fasten (so farre as I saw) I could heare nothing but *that it is too late, I must be burned in Hell.* Yet then was hee willing that I should pray for him, (and therfore hee was not without hope,) and I did. In which hee was carefull to goe along with, mee many times with sighs. After this he was something quieter for a time, and I went to my Office in the Church, where I forgat not him, *that* GOD *would restore him the dayes of repentance, that he might performe the dayes of promise.*

When Evening Prayer was done, I went to him againe:

and

and when I had secluded the company, I prest him with teares; not to cast away that soule for which CHRIST dyed: shewing him that CHRIST rejected none that did not reject him. He answered, *Hee had cast off* CHRIST, *and therefore he must go to hell.* But yet (said I) pray with me that *Christ* would come againe: there is yet an houre in the day, and if *Christ* (*God* and Man) comes, he can and will assist you to do a great deale of worke on a sudden. He would not heare of that; he turned away, and said, hee was unfit to pray. Hee often complained *that former counsels and Prayers might have done him good, but now it was too late*; as if that scarefull saying had stucke in his soule, *Because I have called, and yee refused, I have stretched out* Prov. 1.24, 25, 26, 27.

my hand, and no man regarded; but have set at nought all my counsell, and would none of my reproofe, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mocke when your feare commeth, as desolation and destruction, as a whirle-winde.

By this time he began to discover some ill distemper in his braine, for want of sleep: for this was now the fourth day and night (as I remember) that hee had taken no rest. And had not his reason beene so vigorous, and his discourse so piercing, I should have thought want of sleep a great cause of the whole combate. But when I consider his reason, discourse, and life, contrary to knowledge and Conscience; doubtlesse (whatsoever GOD hath done with his soule, and wee are bound to hope the best) this example is a warning-piece shot out by the

GOD

God of Heaven, to warne all Young-men with us, to signifie that it is high time for them to leave off their riotous courses, lest a worse thing come unto them.

It is not bad enough to have these horrors and perplexities for sinnes and punishments? He was no swearer, no whoremonger, no theefe, no scoffer at Religion, no perjured wretch, no wilfull lyar, no proud and surley resister of good counsell and reproofe, like too many other young-men now a dayes: yet when conscience is awaked, and sits as a Iudge on him, *Only for drunkennesse, neglect of mens bodyes, and neglect of Prayer, Word, and Sacrament,* he passeth this heavie doome upon himselfe, I must bee burned in the furnace of Hell millions of millions of ages; and at the last, in idleneſſe of thoughts and

and talke he ends his miserable life.

This is your example which he intreated me to lay before you, that ye may be warned by it to keepe you from Hell. The living God present it as a powerfull example to your Consciences that it may work that good which this miserable young man wished. And that it may the more prevaile, ye shall have a rule now, as well as an example, shewing the misery and horrour of a wicked life from this proverbe.

The Text Pro. 4. 19. 1. Connected v. 1. & 10.

The way of the wicked is as darkenesse, they know not at what they stumble.

Salomon had pressed in many words, (becaus all words were not enough) all Young-men, *in his sonne*, to avoide the needlesse and vaine society of wicked men: Verse 14. *Enter not in-*

to the path of the wicked, and goe not into the way of evill men. Art thou allured? *Avoide it.* Vers. 15. Is the way delightfull? *Passe not by it.* Doth thy way lye that way? *Turne from it.* Art thou call'd in whithersoever thou goest? *Passe away.*

This exhortation, being thus pressed with words, is further urged by reasons. First, from the persons and states of wicked men; *They sleepe not except they have done mischiefe* Verse 16. themselves, or made others to doe it: for how can they, when they eate the iron bread of wickednesse, and the Sodome Wine of violence? This breeds no sweete regime to binde up the senses. Secondly, he urgeth it from the course of wicked men, which he sets downe comparatively with the godly; *The path* Verse 18. *of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more*

and

and more to the perfect day. The descent of grace is from heaven, as the light shineth: the degrees of grace are not all attained unto at the first, but more, and more: but the prosperitie of grace, where it is nourished by a godly life, is not to goe out to the perfect day. Therefore it is excellent to be in society with the godly. But for the course of wicked men:

Verse 9.

2. Divided.

1. It *is as darkenesse*, there is the danger of it.

2. *They know not at what they stumble*, there is the signe of it.

3. Expounded.

In this course of wicked men there are two propositions, which I shall labour to open, and apply unto you.

Propos. 1.

First, *That the way of the wicked is darkenesse.*

That ye may conceive this, I shall open unto you (thorow God's help) foure points.

1. What

1. What is the way of the wicked?

2. How is it darkneſſe?

3. How it comes to be ſo?

4. Why it is darkneſſe?

1. The way of the wicked is the whole courſe of a wicked man, to death, and Hell. *David* ſaith, *The way of the wicked ſhall perish*: that is, his thoughts, words, deeds wherein he pleaſeth himſelfe, till at laſt he ſees and feeles the empty vanity of them, when the comfort of them leaves him, and he fall into hell.

1. What the way of the wicked is. *Pſal.* 1. ult.

2. This way of the wicked is darkneſſe, by an abſence of that firſt light which GOD gave to Adam, and obedient man. Before man had ſinned, hee had the light of knowledge, the light of grace, and the light of comfort. He could fully and fairely ſee what was ſin for a creature, to keepe him in

2. How it is darkeneſſe. *Negatio luxus primitivæ.*

in perpetuall communion and fellowship with God. He had the beames of Gods grace in him and about him, keeping out the darkeneſſe of ſin. He had ſweet comfort in the injoyment of God, and himſelfe, and in the beſt poſſeſſion and uſe of all the creatures. But when he fell from the Principles of Life, the Lord and his Law, he quickly was overwhelmed with the darkeneſſe of ignorance, the darkeneſſe of ſin, and the darkneſſe of miſery. Our bleſſed Luk. 1.79. Saviour came *to give light to them that ſit in darkneſſe, and in the ſhadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of Peace*: the light of knowledge, *that they that ſeeme might ſee*; the light of grace, Ioh. 8.12. that they that follow him might not walke in darkneſſe, *but have the light of life*. And the light of glory

for

sort, that he might give beauty for ashes, *the oyle of joy for mourning*, and the *garment of gladnesse for the spirit of heavinesse*. All wicked men that misse this, that are in hunting with *Esau*, while this blessing is given, following the luxurious courses of the world in wickednesse, while CHRIST *brings life and immortality to light by the Gospell*, doe fall into darknesse, darknesse, darknesse: Because *they loved darknesse rather than light*: therefore *their imaginations are darkened through ignorance*, their foolish *hearts are full of darknesse*: they looke to the earth, and *behold darknesse and sorrow*: they fall to the darknesse of horrour (for *there is no peace to the wicked, saith my* GOD,) they goe downe to the *place of darknesse* and the horrible pit shuts her mouth upon them

Esa. 61 3.

2 Tim. 1. 10.

Ioh. 3. 19.

Eph. 4. 19.

Rom. 1. 31.

Eph. 5. 30.

Esa. 57. 21. Mat. 8. 12. Psal. 69.

them. O woe unto them, they have rewarded evill unto their soules.

3. But how doth the wicked mans way become to bee darkneſſe? As outward darkneſſe doth grow upon men three wayes, ſo doth this. First *naturally*, by ſome defect in naturall generation. So there being a naturall defect now in mans propagation, through ſin he brings forth blind Whelps. Though more or leſſe, for *naturall excellency* man bee not borne blinde: yet for *morrall rectitude* to improve his underſtanding to the beſt advantage for his happines in Gods way, *bee is darkeneſſe*. Secondly *actually*, by too much gazing on the excelling ſenſibles of the world, or by too much heate or cold, which checke or chill the ſpirits. So when wicked men doe too much gaze upon the deceitfull

Eph. 5. 8.

glories

glories and pleasures of the World, when they are cold in Religion or religious duties, and doe hotly pursue the pleasing vanities of this life, they become clouded in the thicke smoake of darkenesse. This blinded that *rich foole* from securing his soule: and *Zaccheus* before his conversion from going the right way to heaven. For they *that will bee rich* fall into temptations, and snares, and into *many foolish and hurtfull lusts which drowne men in perdition and destruction.* Thirdly, *penally*, when it is inflicted as a punishment: as when *Zedechias* his eyes were pulled out as a just punishment upon his wicked life; so when God sees the courses of men to be foule and detestable, contrary to the light of the word, and checke of Conscience, which he hath given them; then God justly

Luke 12.
Luk 19.2.

1 Tim. 6.9.

Eph.6 10.

1 Ioh.2.11.

ly, *shuts their eyes, stoppes their eares,* and takes away the key of knowledge: and so *they are in darknesse, walke in darknesse, and know not whither they goe, because that darknesse hath blinded their eyes.*

4. Why the wayes of the wicked are darknesse. *Tenebræ à tenendo.*

Now if you would know why the wayes of the wicked are thus said to be as darknesse? The grounds of that speech may be such as these: First, their sights are hindred from seeing the right way to Heaven. They grope at noon day, running headlong in their owne courses all the life long day, and at what time the night of death, or the sun set of sicknesse comes, and they begin to recollect them, saying, where am I now? Is this the way to heaven? Then they see what they did not see, and the whirlewind and tempest takes them, and they are carryed whither they would

would not. Secondly, their footsteps are troubled from going about the workes of GOD. As the Ægyptians choaked in their palpable darkneſſe, ſaw not what they did, or what to doe; ſo when this darkneſſe is come upon the wicked man, *Hee that walketh in darkeneſſe knoweth not whither hee goeth.* Here he goes and meetes with a blocke, there he turnes and meets with a buſh: and after a thouſand calls of GOD to doe this, that, and the other duty of Repentance, faith and holineſſe, he is ſo inwrapped in darkneſſe, that many things are gone about, and few things are done: thoſe few that are done, are not done as they ought. 3. They are drawne on to many a fall, even to the ruine of bodies and ſoules. As men in darkneſſe (if they will be doing) ſtumble and fall:

2.

Exod 10.

Ioh. 12.35.

Vivant alud agendo, nihil agendo, aliter agendo.

3.

νὺξ, à νύπτω. *Nox à nocendo.*

so wicked men in this estate stumble into a thousand pitfals. Here they fall into pride and niggardize, there into pride and luxury, on this hand into covetousnesse, on that hand into prodigality, here lyes the drunkard, there the lyar; here lyes the worldly old man, there the regardlesse young man. Lord, how doe they fall in darknesse, till they are *turned backe into perpetuall rebellions, till they fall and rise no more?* Fourthly, they are smitten with feates & terrours when they will give leisure to Conscience to worke. They are *taken with feare where no feare is.* As men in a darke night being awaked by feare-full melancholy, sight of sin, or lash of Conscience, doe thinke every bush a Thiefe, every gale of winde, the moving of Satan, or the wagging of every leafe a summons

Ier. 8.4,5.

Psalm. 14.

mons to the Devils approach; so is it with wicked men in this darkneſſe. Fifthly, their ſhame is taken from them. They are foole-hardy and confident in the darke, becauſe no eye ſees them. It is ſaid of the Aſſe, that being purſued by the Wolfe, he puts his head into a buſh, that he may not ſee the Wolfe; as if, becauſe he ſees not the Wolfe, the Wolfe therefore ſees not him. So is it with wicked men; they put their heads into a darke corner of ſin and ignorance, and then, as if he *that pierced through the darke cloud* could not ſee, they goe on without feare, wit, or ſhame. They *lay their iniquities on their skirts, and declare their ſinnes as Sodome, they hide them not:* as if they hurted not them, nor would bring ſhame at the latter end,

Lamen. 1. Eſa. 3. 9.

Thus have I plained the way in

Appli.

1 Ioh.2.13.

in opening this part of the Proverbe: and now *I write unto you young men*, that you may overcome that evill one. Suffer therefore first a word of conviction, and next a word of exhortation.

1. Hence wicked men are convinced of their miserable estate.

Ye may be convinced hence of two things:

1. First, concerning a wicked mans estate, that he is in a miserable case, whatsoever he thinkes of himselfe. If thou wert shut up in a dark prison, where thou couldst not have any fellowship with light, wouldst thou not thinke thy selfe in a wofull plight? Much more art thou thus, if thou be in the darknesse of ignorance, sin and misery.

Ob. Though they see it not.

Sol.

You will say, I see no such matter. If I am in misery, I see it not. It may be so, and yet your misery is not the lesse. As *Christ* said, *because yee say yee see, therefore your sinne re-*

Ioh.9.41.

maineth:

maineth: ſo ſay I, becauſe you ſay you ſee not, therefore your danger is the greater. If in a deſperate diſeaſe a man ſay he is well, its a certain ſigne death is comming on a pace: ſo is it a ſigne that miſery lies at the doore (though you have ſhut it out a while) becauſe ye ſay ye ſee it not.

Put caſe it be ſo (ſay you) yet you feele no hurt by it for the preſent. Ye goe on in ſinne, and thrive, and are merry, and what evill can come? Take heed; while a man is luſty and ſtrong, a man can endure hot and cold, night and day, and never ſhrinke; but when hee is downe, by age, ſickneſſe, ſurfeit, or the like, then every blaſt pierceth through: ſo while you are in health and proſperity, you are like a Church Wardens Bill, *which anſwereth all is well, when too many things are*

Ob. And though they feele it not

Sol.

amisse: but when sickneſſe, and death comes, downe you ſink with ſhame and horrour, like the fiſhes of *Jordan*, which fall into the dead-Sea, and are no more alive.

Obiect. Yea, but you are not in this darke ſtate; you heare the Word and underſtand it, and have a power to underſtand more: therefore certainly you ſhall not be darkneſſe for ever; for *a power doth diſpoſe you to the act and exerciſe which ſhall follow.* Be not deceived. For though it be true of *a naturall power*, which comes into act by the power of ſome inward principle, that if you have ſuch a power, it ſhall bee brought into act, more or leſſe, according to the power, as when Grapes have a power to drop Wine, and Apples Cydar; and ſo, if as men, you have a power to reaſon, it is more or leſſe ſhewed by diſcourſe, either by inward

Potentia eſt diſpoſitio rei ad actũ.

Potentia naturalis, vi principii interni.

inward conceptions, or outward expressions: yet is it not true *of an obediential power*, which is drawne out by a power from without; as when the waters of *Ægypt* are turned into bloud, and the water at the marriage of *Cana* was turned into wine: and so, though you have a naturall power to know (according to your measure) and so to be acquit of humane darknesse, yet amidst your hearing and understanding; you must be *turned from darknesse to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that you may receive forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and inheritance amongſt them that are ſanctified by faith in* CHRIST. If therefore you would be freed from this darkneſſe, you must depend upon God (whom you cannot command at pleasure) *to give the increaſe*, and to acquit you from this misery.

2. *Potentia obedientialis, vi principij externi.*

Ioh. 2.

Act. 26. 18.

Secondly,

2. Therefore thinke it not ſtrange to ſee the wicked doe ſhamefull things.

Secondly, ye may be convinced hence, not to thinke it ſtrange to ſee poore ſinners to doe that, *of which they are afterwards aſhamed*. The *adulterer* watcheth for his twilight: the drunkard ſeeketh his cloſe corners to couzen his ſoule and purſue in: the lyar deſireth his *ſay-nothing*: and all luxuriants hunt out their coverts and thickets: and when they are rowzed by the Iuſtice of GOD and man, they cannot indure the light, having ſuch evill deeds; for they are aſhamed and confounded. Doe not wonder at all this, and much more in this kinde; becauſe what they wrought, was done in darkneſſe, and now it is brought to light.

Ob. Though they doe thinke their darkeneſſe not the cauſe of their ſhame becauſe they know much.

But why ſhould I thinke darkeneſſe to bee the cauſe of their ſhame, ſeeing many of them have a great deale of know-

knowledge? It is true in truth, ungodly men may gaine a great measure of knowing knowledge: *Iudas* preached for Christ, and *Julian* writ for him; yea, unlearned men, whose cure is to feel divinity beating in the pulse of their hearts and lives, above the flowing of it in their braines, may take Heaven by violence, while the more learned (carefull to know and careleſſe to doe) may bee thrust into Hell. But let them gaine what knowledge they can the understanding singly taken is not that which God most delighteth in, to keepe them from shame by it, but *hee dwels in a contrite and broken heart*, to keepe them from the power of sin, & horor of shame

Sol.

Surgunt indocti, & rapiunt cœlum, & nos doctores trucimur in imum.

Esay 66. 2.

Secondly, be now exhorted to avoyd the waies of wicked men, which will bring you to such sinnes as darkeneſſe breeds, and darkeneſſe feeds.

2. Therefore be exhorted to avoide the wayes of wicked men.

Ye

Ye shall one day find that this darkneſſe breeds careleſneſſe, ſinful delight, feare, and doubting. In darkneſſe men are careleſſe of their goings and doings: So, while yee are in the wicked way, ye are careleſſe of your duties to God and man: and yee regard not *though ye walk naked* (without the garments of faith in Chriſt, and the obedience of faith and your *ſhame lyes open.* In darkneſſe ſinfull delights are moſt welcome: when drunkards were more modeſt, and aſhamed of the noon-day, the Apoſtle ſaith, *they that are drunke, are drunke in the night*; And *Job* ſaith, that the Adulterer hunteth for the twilight, and flattereth himſelfe, that God cannot pierce thorow the darke cloud. So, while yee are in this blacke way, yee freely drinke of this Cup of the pleaſures of ſinne,

I.

Apoc. 16. 15

1 Theſ. 5.

finne, even to the dreggs. In darkneſſe, they eſpecially that are apprehenſive are full of feares, whether they ſhall receive hurt, full of doubting whether they are, and doe, right or wrong. So while ye are in this pitchy way, in the midſt of laughter your heart is heavie: yee ſome-times feare the hurt yee may ſuffer, what if I bee ſicke? what if I die? what if divine Iuſtice ſeaze upon mee? what ſhall become of me then? Ye ſometimes doubt whether that bee the way to Heaven or Hell, wherein yee walke. If it bee the way to Heaven, which of the Saints of GOD have gone before mee in it thither? If the way to Hell, why doe I walke in it ſtill? Beſides, yee ſhall one day finde that this darkneſſe feeds and nouriſheth ſin. For as men in darkneſſe, being ſet upon a courſe, will be

be resolute to doe it still: So while ye are in this way, ye will be fatted in obstinacy against God, and in resolution to doe what ye list. This Christ lamented in *Ierusalem*, *Oh if thou hadst knowne in this thy day the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.* This also may you lament in your selves (if you could) with teares of bloud.

Luk. 19. 41, 42.

Ob. Sol. To your hurt, though you thinke it will doe you little or no hurt.

Perhaps you may think that all this will do you little hurt. But GOD open your eyes in time that you may see to your amendment, that it will bring you to the darkenesse of Hell, where ye shall finde horror without the least comfort, and torment without the least ease. None of the plagues of Ægypt were so afflictive to *Pharaoh*, as darkenesse was. This extorted from him this speech, which was not heard be-

before, *Gae you and your children, and serve the LORD.* How much more will ye be preſſed with the darkneſſe of Hell, which is the proper place of torment! This makes theſe poore darke creatures, before they come there, to cry out, I ſhall bee burned in Hell for ever and ever, what ſhall I doe, what ſhall I doe? Exo. 10.24.

If therfore there be any feare of *God* before your eyes, if any bowels of compaſſion to your miſerable body, and ſoules, avoid theſe helliſh wayes of wicked men while ye are yong Suppoſe that Ieſus Chriſt, and Satan ſtood before GOD to plead for you, *Chriſt* could ſay, Behold bleſſed Father, I have taken their nature upon mee, I have done, and dyed for them, I have preſented thee with a full ſatisfaction, and have offered to them this great

grace

grace to heare my Gospell, and beleeve it: yea, I have beene assistant to the ministery of the Church to convince them of their wicked courses, to move them to come to me, to assure them, that I and mine are all theirs, if they repent and believe the Gospell, yet have they not honored me by faith and love. But Sathan pleads, Behold thou great *God* of Heaven and Earth, I never tooke their nature upon mee, yet they love me and my courses better than themselves. I never did any thing for their good, but for their snare and ruine, yet they cleave to mee and my works of darkneſſe, my pleasures deceitfull pleasures of sin for a season, more than to thee and thy Word. I never died for them, yet they live and die in my cause and quarrell: drinking, dicing, drabbing, night and day: revelling

velling with thy good creatures, reviling of thy vertuous servants, and resolving still to doe as they have done. I never offered them grace, but sinne, and they have resisted & spurned at that, and accepted this with greedinesse. All this and more, may truely bee said by that Lion of the Tribe of *Iudah*, and that roaring Lion that seeketh whom hee may devoure. Set your selves to present such a plea to your soules, and thinke whether the devill hath not powerfull reasons to move that GOD, who is a consuming fire, to deliver you up to his hands, so long as you are in darkenesse. What an hell will this be to you before you come to hell, if you repent not? What an hell will it be to you to saile by, before you come to hell, if ye repent not, and forsake not your sins? Will yee not thinke of to day,

while

while it is called to day? Will ye ſtill goe on in the wayes of ſinne, though ye cannot proſper? God forbid, the ſafety of your ſoules forbids it; your Covenant in Baptiſme forbids it, and all the mercies wherewith the Lord hath renewed you from your youth up hitherto.

Ye may thinke your ſelves ſafe enough, and that all your darke and ſlotous courſes ſhall end in a ſun-ſhine of glory and happineſſe: but (alas) in your way there lye many things at which ye may ſtumble, and ſo tumble into the pit of hell unawares, which is the next conſiderable proportion in this Proverbe, to wit,

Propoſ. *That wicked men know not at what they ſtumble.*

Do ye deſire to gaine to your ſoules from this?

Then weigh with me theſe three particulars:

1 What

1 What it is to ſtumble?
2 Whereat they ſtumble? and,
3 That they ſtumble, becauſe they know not at what.

To ſtumble is to take an argument of offence at ſomething, to make them fall ſtill into the wayes of wickedneſſe. As when the Iewes took theſe arguments againſt *Chriſt* to conclude againſt faith in him, *He is a man gluttonous, a wine bibber, a friend of Publicans and ſinners: Wee ſay well that thou art a Samaritan, and haſt a Divell.* And when the *Iewes* took theſe arguments againſt *Stephen, We have heard him ſpeake blaſphemous words againſt Moſes, againſt God, againſt this holy place, and the Law.* And when the *Corinthians* raiſed this foundation againſt Saint *Paul, This fellow perſwadeth men to worſhip* GOD *contrary to the Law:* and

1. What it is to ſtumble.

Mat. 11. 19.

Ioh. 8. 48.

Acts 6. 11. 13.

Acts 18. 13.

Tertul-

Acts 24.5. *Tertullus* in a flanting ſpeech before *Fœlix*, *wee have found this man a very peſtilence, a mover of ſedition among all the Iewes in all the World.* Theſe are arguments of offence, to make them that doe receive them ſtill to fall into ſin, new ſins, old ſins, all ſins.

2. But whereat ordinarily doe wicked men ſtumble? Ordinarily at ſixe ſorts of things, when they would flatter themſelves in their wayes of darkeneſſe. Either, *Ignorance*; or, *preſumption*; or, *deſpaire*; or, *the World*; or, *ſcandall*; or, *the peaceable end of ſinners*, and the contrary of thoſe that have lived more ſtrictly.

1. They ſtumble at ignorance on both hands. Sometimes they ſtumble at the ignorance of ſin, and ſo they fall to ſin, and care not, feare not, When *Ioſiah* knew not ſin, his ſweet nature ſtumbled with the times:

times: but when he heard the Law of God read, he rent his clothes, and melted to the very heart. When *Saul* lived a *Pharisee*, the death of *Stephen* was nothing, it could be swallowed up upon a full stomack: but when the Law came and shewed him what sinne was, when hee saw sinne revive, to pricke, wound, and kill, then he mourned under his captivity. Sometimes they stumble at the ignorance of Repentance: They are like *Nicodemus*, who cannot heare of a new life, but hee dreames of *entring his mothers wombe againe*: and like *Peters* hearers, who when they sinned knew not what they did; and when they were pricked at the heart for sin, knew not what to doe, *Men and brethren, what shall we doe to be saved?*

Rom. 7.

Iohn 3.

Acts 2.

They stumble at presumption, that God will any time accept

2.

accept of them upon any termes. Therfore, *at what time soever*, saith one: *God desireth not the death of a sinner*, saith another: Christ saith, *Come unto me*, saith a third: *God will that all men should bee saved*, saith a fourth. Every presumptuous wretch layeth some sure foundation (which might be found and sweet to a true penitent) which yet will not serve his turne when he is to try the strength of it, no more than *Sampsons* greene Cords could binde him, or a rope of sand can pull down an impregnable Castle.

3. At despaire of their owne strength.

They stumble at despaire, and at that on both sides too. Sometimes they despaire of their owne strength. Alas, all the waies of vertue, grace, and glory are too hard for me. I must lie downe in shame, confusion, sinne, and sorrow, but not move a foot to Hea-

ven.

ven. When Christ preached *that no man could come to him, except it were given him of his Father; many of his Disciples went backe, and walked no more with him:* in so much as CHRIST complained to the twelve, *Will yee also forsake mee?* If *Christ* bee such a manner of person, that accesse to him is so hard, so much above our power, that we must be beholding to a Father whom wee are not acquainted with, then farewell Christ, welcome world who are more familiar. Sometimes againe they despaire of GODS strength and mercy for them. Christ cannot save them, GOD will not save them. Let strength and mercy bee what it will on high, it is too high for them. What is that to me? I am the worst of unworthy sinners. This cast out *Cain*, hanged *Judas*, damned

Ioh.6.65, 66,67.

2. Of Gods strength.

both, and any other that delight in such a downefall.

4. At the world.

They stumble at the world of honour, pleasure, profit. The stony hearers stumbled at the care-cloth, the thornes of cares for worldly pelfe. The unworthy Guests stumbled at the new bought purchases of Farmes, and Oxen; and so much as at the new married Wife, *I cannot come.* The rich worldling at the new Barnes, and store for many dayes. His soule did so alwayes live in them, that hee thought hee should alwayes live with them. Thus they stumbled and fell. The huge blocke of the World was too great for them to leape over into heaven, and therefore downe they fall, and breake their neckes into the wayes of sinne.

Matth. 13.

Matth 22.

5. At scandall

They stumble at scandall, and at that they trip dangerously on

on both hands. Sometimes they are loth to offend their wicked companions; what? shall I forsake them, scandalize them, goe without them, (though) in a better way, make them that are my friends my foes, to neglect and scoffe at mee? This made *Nicodemus* come to *Christ* by night. This made *many of the chiefe Rulers believe in him, but they confessed him not, lest they should bee put out of the Synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.* Sometimes againe they take offence at the lives of those that seeme to bee more godly than themselves, and are so (at least) by profession. Indeed, these should bee very carefull to adorne the doctrine of our *Lord Jesus Christ*: and therefore many excellent exhortations are spent upon them, in the most sure Word

Being loath to offend their wicked companions.

Ioh 3. 1.

Ioh. 12. 42, 43.

And being offended at the lives of professors.

Tit. 2.

of GOD. Sometimes they are called upon *to behave themselves wisely to them that are without*: Sometimes to *walke honestly towards them that are without*: sometimes, to *give no offence neither to Jew, Grecian*, nor *Church of* GOD: yet are they not so carefull in the workes of holinesse righteousnesse, and sobriety, as they ought. This is soone espied by wicked men, and so made an argument to stumble at.

1 Thes. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 10. 32.

which they easily espy though they are in darknesse.

You will say, They are in darknesse, how then can they spie such a hole in the coat of him that is better than themselves? Ile tell you: when men see a thing that may further them in the way to Heaven, they do receive it inward by the meanes of the spirit, and the sweet beames of grace which shine about them; *For every good giving comes from the*

Iames 1.

the Father of lights: but when they see any thing that helpes them onward to Hell, they have a power of seeing from within. As a Cat sees in a darke night by syring the aire to her selfe, and for her owne uses: so wicked men being set on fire of Hell, can in their darkest state easily kindle a light for their owne uses to find fodder for their soules in their way to Hell-ward.

From a light not from without but from within. Iames 3.

They stumble, Lastly, at the peaceable end of sinners. Truly, they dyed like Lambes, *There are no hands in their death:* just like the good thiefe upon the Crosse, which with quiet and sweet reaches after grace and glory, breathed out his soule to GOD; notwithstanding all the wickednesse of his forepast life: whereas many of those who have lived better, have died with little rest,

6. At the peaceable end of sinners. Psal. 73.

And the troubled deaths of the Godly.

and no comfort. Hence they ſtumble thicke and threefold, and make no queſtion to dy no worſe than they, though they doe as bad.

3. They ſtumble becauſe they know not at what

Thus they ſtumble and ſtumble; and the cauſe or the ſigne of all, is this in the Proverbe, *They know not at what they ſtumble.* As for ſinne, they

1. They know not who they are that ſinne.

do not know who they themſelves are that ſin. They are the creatures of GOD who hath bleſſed them a thouſand wayes, and therefore they ſhould live to the honour of him, and not as if the Devill had made them. They

2. Whom they ſinne againſt.

doe not know whom they ſin againſt. It is againſt an infinite GOD, who is an infinite good, and therefore the leaſt guilt will not ſo eaſily bee taken off as they dreame. Can much Niter and much Sope doe it? *Can thouſands of*

Micah 6.

Rammes, and ten thouſand Rivers

vers of Oyle? Sinne against a private man, and it is a trespasse or battery; sin against a King, it is sedition or treason; but sinne against God, and no name can expresse it, nothing can cleanse it *but the bloud of the Lambe*, which brings to us *the righteousnesse of* GOD, which is of infinite worth. They doe not know what sin will worke. It is the wilde Bore of the Wood that laies waste the Vine of our soules: it woundeth the Conscience, defaceth the Image of GOD, and writes upon us Satans Image and superscription: it brings feare, pit, and snare upon the inhabitants of the earth and at the last, the vengeance of eternall fire. All this and much more, about sin, these poore wretches doe not know, and hence they stumble upon sinne, and ruine.

1 Ioh. 1. Rom. 3. 2 Cor. 5.

3. What sinne will worke.

2. They know not

As for Repentance they

1. The necessity of repentance. Luk. 13.

know neither the necessity, worke, or worth of it. Doe they present this to their soules, *that except they repent, they shall perish?* Yes that they doe, and therefore they will repent hereafter. Yea, but are they not deceived in the worke of it? Doe they not thinke it to bee the worke of an houre, when the whole life of a man were but enough for us to walke in that way? Doe they not thinke it to bee nothing but a conviction for sinne, a sorrow for sinne, and a crying God mercy? Doe they know that it implyes *sorrow for sinne seene, purpose to forsake sin sorrowed for, and to returne unto God?* Or know they that it is accompanied (if it be saving) with an holy course in godlinesse and righteousnesse? No such matter. It is so slenderly looked after: and so poorely prized by them, that they

2. Nor the work of it.

3. Nor the worth of it.

they take it up as old shooes, when they have none else to weare: when they have not a day to live, and an houre to spend in sinne, then they will repent, what ever come of it. Thus these miserable wretches, when they have built a Castle of their owne Repentance, not Gods, do stumble at they know not what.

Now, for presumption (woe is them) whatsoever they dreame of Mountaines of mercy, *They know not the power of* GODS *wrath.* They thinke him to bee made up of nothing but mercy, and that hee should doe them wrong, if they should not have it. They see the light of his countenance so long in their health and prosperity, that they presume hee cannot bend his browes, and turne his backe in after daies. Doe they remember that after *God* had made the

3. They know not the power of GODS wrath. Psal. 91.

In the workes of this justice.

world, his first act was an act of justice upon lapsed Angels, who, though they were in Heaven, *were cast*
2 Pet. 2. 4. *downe into Hell, and delivered into the chaines of darkenesse, to bee reserved unto judgement?* Have they forgotten that his next worke was a worke of justice upon *Adam* in Paradise; and the third that wee reade, of a worke of justice upon *Cain* for committing
Genesis 4. murther but once? Have they not read that GOD drowned
Gen. 6. 5. the first world, first for imagi-
Gen. 8. 21. nations? Or that he burned with fire and brimstone *Sodome* and her wicked sisters,
Gen. 19. for pride, fulnesse of bread,
Ezek. 16. abundance of idlenesse, which hatched plenty of lust? Is the justice of GOD upon the world cleane gone out of minde, when his Church was in a Corner, and but a little flocke? Or will they not see the

the justice of *God* upon *Christ*, *Our surety, in the similitude of sinfull flesh*; that hee did not escape it, *being made sin for us* (that is, by being a sacrifice for sin) *that wee might be the righteousnesse of GOD in him?* They have forgotten all prints of Iustice, that they may put farre from them the evill day, and sinne without feare. But that God that is a God of mercy, for *the vessels of mercy*, is for those who by wilfull sins make themselves the vessels of wrath, *a consuming fire*: yea, and when his hand takes hold of judgement, hee will make *his sword drunke with blood.* Then shall they know what now they willingly *know not, that hee that blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walke in the imagination of my heart, to adde drunkennesse to thirst, the Lord will not bee mercifull unto him.*

Hebr. 9. Rom. 8. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 21.

Rom. 11.

Deut. 32. 41, 42. 2 Pet. 3.

Deut. 29. 19, 20.

Doc

4. They know not what they can do in good because they try not.

Esa. 59. 29. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25. Tit. 3. 5. Eph. 6. Phil. 4. 13.

5. They know not what is the power of Gods mercy.

Si peccantibus tibi, multo magis panitentibus. Esa. 66.

Doe they stumble at despaire of their owne strength: It is at they know not what still. For doe they not shew great strength in sinne? Why then will they not try what they can doe in vertue? Hath not CHRIST promised his assistance in the Word of GOD, and Sacraments? Why will they neglect CHRISTS hand, which is put under to helpe? Why will they not be *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, that they may be able to doe all things through him that helpeth them?*

Will they more impotently stumble at the despaire of *Gods* mercy? Surely they stumble at they know not what. For *God* is good unto wicked men, much more to those that truely repent. Doth not his Sun and raine blesse obdurate sinners? much more hath hee the blessing of peace for those *that tremble*

tremble at his Word, and are *weary and heavie laden* with their sinnes. For will they forget how willingly GOD reasoneth with the rebellious *Iewes*, and promiseth that upon Repentance he will make their *twice dipt scarlet sinnes as white as wooll?* Or doe they not regard that GOD tels them that *mercy pleaseth him.* If hee come in a work of justice, *hee shaves with a Raser that is hired* (as if hee had no instrument of his owne to execute wrath:) but if he comes in a worke of mercy, it is his own work, his proper worke. But they forget this, as if *Christs* bloud did not triumph over all the sins of penitents, even to the bathing of them that turne to him, who shed it by murther: this they forget, and so doe stumble at headlong despaire.

Matth. 11.

To embrace penitents. Esay 1.

Mic. 7. 18. Esa. 7. 20.

Esa. 28. 21. *Opus justitiæ est opus alienum.*

Act. 2.

Doe they stumble at the world

They know not how weake all the world is if it were on their side. 1 Cor. 7.

world? Alas, they know not at what. What is all the world if wee could graſpe it into an handfull? It flattereth while it ſmileth, *and the glory of it paſſeth away.* Have wee the confluence of all worlds goods? They cannot keep off a thouſand miſeries; Gowts, Conſumption, Fevers, Stone, Strangury, death are the portions of this worlds wantons. And when that goes from us, or we from that, it gives a bitter farewell to the lovers of it. *Though a man live many dayes, yet let him remember the dayes of darkneſſe,* which will come firſt or laſt, and then farewell profit, farewell pleaſure, farewell honour: the white ſticke muſt be broken, worldly comforts muſt vaniſh, and if yee have not built your neſt in the Rocke Chriſt, *the wind will take you,* the world will ſpew you out, and whither then?

Eccl. 11.

Eſa. 41. 16.

Doe

Doe they ſtumble at the offence of their companions? It is at they know not what ſtil. Call for them all, whom you are loth now to offend in pleaſing GOD; and what can they doe? *As the Winter brookes they paſſe away*, ſaith *Iob*. Are they touched for ſinne? They will bee glad to bee rid of them: *away from mee yee wicked, I will keep the Commandements of my GOD*. Doth the wrath of GOD come? They can ſay, alas my brother, alas his glory; but as *the wrath of man cannot accompliſh the righteouſneſſe of GOD*; ſo nor the power of man can ſtand (with comfort) againſt the wrath of GOD. Doth *poverty come as an armed man?* A worldly friend will helpe once, a godlie friend will helpe twice, but daily to hang upon the pockets, and purſe-ſtrings of

7. They know not how little their companions can do for them.

Pſalm. 119.

Iames 1.

Pſalm. 6.

Prov. 6.

of others, is like a curst wife, *a continuall dropping*; away with such a like fellow from off the earth, the land is not able to beare such a loathsome guest. Doth death come *with this Iron Law, You must goe and make your bed in darkenesse*, where they must say to corruption, thou art my mother; to the Worme thou art my brother and sister? Where are their companions now? One stands by and weepes, but cannot helpe: another would come, but feares the flashes of reproofe for godlesse courses: but let them all come, can they deliver their bodies from the grave, and *their soules from the hand of Hell?* The Redemption of a soule cost more than so: they must let that alone for ever. What matters it then to offend such, so they may please God?

Psal. 49.

Doe

Doe they now ſtumble at the lapſes and falls of thoſe that ſeeme better than themſelves? Is it not ſtill at they know not what? If a Chriſtian ſinne, it is not becauſe hee is a Chriſtian, but becauſe hee is a Chriſtian no more: it is not the profeſſion, but the perſon that is in all the fault. Hee that is a good Chriſtian, ſhould anſwer like that bleſſed Martyr, who when hee was asked what was his name? hee anſwered. *Chriſtian*: what was his Countrey, anſwered, *Chriſtian*: what were his hopes, thoughts words, and deeds? Hee anſwered *Chriſtian*. He was a Chriſtian all over: and if it bee otherwiſe, Chriſtianity muſt not bee blamed, but ſinne in him, and Sathan out of him, that put on that faire hood to cover their deformitie. Beſides, ſinne ſhall

8. They know not that the falls of Chriſtians is, becauſe they are not Chriſtians enough.

shall condemn them, not justifie the wicked stumbler. They shall goe to hell for that without Repentance: the wicked shall not goe to Heaven for being worse, because they are bad.

9. They know not that sinners end is not alwayes peaceable.

And what doe they stumble at now? Is it at the peaceable end of sinners? It is still at they know not what. For it is not ever true that wicked men finde such a calme when death approacheth; sometimes Hell fire flasheth upon them then; sometimes they miserably cry out, *I am damned, I am damned, I must to Hell*: and when it is true, GOD, Satan, and themselves, have an hand in it, God justly seales them up to hardnesse of heart, and then like the Leviathan, they laugh at the Speare. Satan covers their sins, and lockes in their thoughts to dreame of golden Mountaines. Hee labours to

And when it is.

Durities hominis peccatum obduratio judiciũ Dei. It yeilds no comfort.

make

make their life and death to be an heaven here, that hee may the more cunningly bring them to hell hereafter. *Themselves* have accustomed themselves to sinne, and custome in sinne takes away the sense of sinning, and so like *Nabal, their heart dies like a stone.* And put case that Gods good people be disquieted when death appeareth; They draw neere to GOD, and see themselves abominable as *Esaias.* They have a circumcised heart, and so are tender at the least touch: which Satan perceiving, hee drives home with all his rage, and skill, to slander his godly course, because his time is but short.

Consuetudo peccandi tollit sensum peccati 1 Sam. 25.

And yet the unquiet end of the godly may. Esay 6.

Thus now ye have the whole Proverbe, which sets forth a rule to your miserable example to shew the miserable estate of those that are, and walk, and stand, and sit, in the darke

darke wayes of sin and wickednesse.

Appli. Therefore let this proverbe sinke into your harts.

What shall I say to you Young men? O that I could speake to your hearts so powerfully, that yee may be rowzed from lying under the dominion of sinne any longer! *Oh that my Doctrine might drop as the raine, and my speech might distill as the dew, as the small raine upon the tender herbe, and as the showers upon the grasse!* Yee have heard the woe, woe, woe, to wicked men. Sometimes this keepes them off from vertue and grace, and sometimes that. Here they stumble, and there they stumble, before, behind, on this side, and on that, and at last tumble into despaire, and Hell for evermore. *Francis Spyra* stumbled thus, when hee cried out, *I would faine be in Hell, to try the worst that God can doe.* And that outlandish wretch thus,

Deut. 32.2.

Many have thus stumbled.

who

who would have given all to his ſoul, not to forſake him: but when nothing would ſerve the turne, but he muſt die, he commended his ſoule to the devill to be carried into everlaſting torments. And that Engliſh wretch thus, I give my goods to the King whom I have cozened, my body to the earth, and my ſoule to the Devill. And that other wretch (not worthy of a name) thus, My ſoule I bequeath to the devill who ownes it; my Wife to the Devill who drew mee to my ungodly life; and my Chaplaine to the Devill who flattered mee in it. But (deare young men) doe not yee ſo Lay hold of eternall life; and pull your ſelves (by the mighty power of GOD) into that way. Vſe no arguments to pull your ſelves into, or keepe your ſelves in the way of ſinne. Quit your ſelves like men, and

But do not you young men ſtumble thus.

and the God of Heaven ſtand by you for your helpe and ſuccour. Now is the accepted time, now is the houre of ſalvation. God hath ſhot a warning peece from Heaven, ſtand not out; but vaile to him, before he ſhoot the vollies of his vengeance againſt you irrecoverably.

2 Cor. 6.

Yee have many motives to make you look about you now for grace and glory. Firſt, your age is a moſt unſettled age, peſtered with many luſts of youth, which drop by drop may fall upon you, till you are ſuddenly over head and eares. That which hath been formerly fained of *Hercules*, that he ſtood in two wayes, ready to take either, is true of you. For as a ſtrait tree which is looſe at the root ſtandeth trembling, and being unſetled, with a little ſtrength is pulled this way, or that way: ſo is it with you who

Conſider your motives to look about you.

Your age is moſt unſetled.

who are ready to bee ſwayed with winde and tyde every way.

Secondly, you will eaſily ſavour ever of that firſt liquor which is put into you. Receive the diſtilled dewes of grace from the Spirit of *God*, and what a ſweet ſavour ſhall yee be in the noſtrils of God, and man? Receive the bloudy ſhowers of devilliſh and worldly temptations, and how will ye ſtinke like *Sodome* and her Siſters? If a man, by his owne, and others diſorders, have his body made crooked when young, he will be crooked in bud, bloſſome, leafe, fruit, and age; but if hee bee ſtrait then (hee by the grace of GOD) continues ſtrait ſtill. So will it bee with you: that *which is crooked cannot be made ſtraite, and that which is wanting cannot bee numbred.* Eccl. 1.15.

2. You will eaſily ſavour ever of your firſt liquor.

Thirdly,

3. Yee are now subject to the horribleſt ſinnes,

Thirdly, ye are now ſubject to the horribleſt ſins. That naturall corruption which is rooted in all mankinde, hath in your age more inſtruments to bring it to outward appearance, as flourishing wit to invent, and dexterity in other members to put in execution. As therefore, they that are ſick of burning feavers have need of cooling things, and ſtomackefull Colts have need of ſtronger bits: ſo the fury of your age muſt bee held in, as with a bit and bridle, leſt it run upon you, and lay your honour in the duſt.

4. Your ſins will cry loudeſt. Pſal. 25. 7.

Iob 13. 26.

Fourthly, your ſinnes being committed will cry loudeſt. Theſe made *David* cry out, *remember not the ſins of my youth*, when my ſervice would have beene moſt acceptable. Theſe made *Iob* complaine, *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt mee, and makeſt mee poſſeſſe the iniquities*

quities of my youth. Theſe made *Paul* ply *Timothy, to flee the luſts of youth.* And theſe will make you pittifully cry out too late, We have wearied our ſelves in the wayes of wickedneſſe, when our paths were ſpred with butter. When we were ſtrong, luſty, and able to doe God ſervice, wee ſerved the Devill: and now when *God diſtributeth ſorrowes in his anger, our bones are full of the ſin[illegible] of our youth, which ſhall lye downe with us in the duſt.*

2 Tim. 2. 22.

Iob 21. 17. Iob 20. 11.

5. Laſtly, you think that you have a priviledge by your age: youth muſt have its courſe, they muſt ſowe their wilde Oats. But the counſell of the Spirit is otherwiſe, *In the morning ſow thy ſeede, and in the evening with-hold not thy hand, for thou knoweſt not whether ſhall proſper.* Therefore *Salomon* thinkes ſuch more worthy to be laught at, then to bee an-

5. Your age hath no priviledge to ſinne.

Eccl. 11. 6.

Eccl.11.9. red, *Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheere thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walke in the wayes of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things* GOD *will bring thee to judgement.* And *David* doth tie up your untamed age to the hornes of the Altar, saying, *that even you must cleanse your wayes, by taking heed thereto according to his word.*

Psal.119.9.

Therefore stumble not at any of these blockes.

If therefore there bee any feare of GOD before your eyes, if yee have any bowels of compassion to your poore soules, walke not in the darke waies of the wicked. Open your eyes to see all the stumbling blocks of wicked men, and stumble not into their paths.

Think how soone yee may dye. Iob 21.23. 24, 25.

O thinke what may come hereafter; how soone you may die, goe hence, and bee no more seene. *One dies in full strength, being*

being wholly at ease and quiet: His brests are full of milke, and his bones are full of marrow: and another dies in the bitternesse of his soule, and never eateth with pleasure: and then without the grace of Repentance, the mercy of pardon, I must to Hell, to millions of millions of torments. Farewell companions, farewell time, farewell pleasure; farewell friends, farewell all your perswasions, *&c.* and shall I say welcome Hell? O no: I would give *thousands of Rams, and tenne thousand Rivers of Oyle; yea, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soule:* but the just Iudge will not accept it, *cut it downe, why cumbreth it the ground: depart from me, I know thee not.*

And then what danger will follow.

With fearfull complaints in vaine. Mic. 6. 7.

Luk. 13. 7. Mat. 7. 23. and 25. 12.

Thus you have had your example and your rule, both shewing the misery of a wicked life: you have had my

charge and discharge. Shall it fall like raine upon the barren Rockes and Mountaines without fruit? Shall it not move one soule to goe from the dens of sinne to GOD? If not, as noble *Terentius*, when hee had petitioned for the Christians, and saw it torne in peeces before his face, gathered up the peeces, and said, I have my reward: I have not sued for gold, silver, honour, or pleasure, but a Church. So say I, in the middest of your neglect, I have not sued for your gold or silver, for your houses and lands, for your drinkes, dice, or drabs, but for your soules, your precious soules. If I cannot or shall not wooe them to come to Christ, God raise up some child of the Bride-chamber which may doe it better. If neither I nor others can prevaile, feare that speech of *Elies* sons, *they hearkened not unto the* 1 Sam. 2. 25.

voice

voice of their father, because the LORD *would slay them.* In such a case, Oh that my head were full of water, and mine eyes a fountaine of teares, that I may weep day and night for the miserable young men of my people. But GOD grant I may have no such cause: *God* grant you may not bee in such a state: God grant you may bee now wise to salvation. For it is your salvation God would have, it is your salvation I would have: and woe unto you if you bee enemies to desires so good, and no lesse usefull than for your salvation, your salvation for ever and ever. Ier. 9. 1.

GOD guide your hearts to the love of God, and to the waiting for of *Christ.*

FINIS.

A POST-SCRIPT TO THE READER *of this* Warning-peece, of the uſe of examples.

LONDON,
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POSTSCRIPT
TO THE
READER

A Poſt-ſcript to the Reader of this Warning peece, *of the uſe of Examples.*

GOod Reader ſtay a while: thou haſt not yet done. I have for thy good, ſet before thee an old Rule, and new examples: and of the abuſe of examples I am not ignorant. Some looke upon them ſo as to imitate them, be they never ſo bad. As *Auguſtus* a learned Prince, filled his Empire with Schollers: ſo *Tiberius*, a diſſembling Prince, with diſſemblers: *Iulian*, an Apoſtate Prince, with Apoſtates: and *Jeroboham* a Calviſh Prince,

with Idolaters. Others looke upon them ſo, as to hate the perſons as well as the ſins. Every fearefull accident, either in the life or death of men, ſpeakes to them the language of damnation.

Howſoever they be abuſed, I am ſure it is moſt fit, yea excellent, to have the white booke of Gods mercies, and the blacke Booke of judgements, alwayes before our eyes. The abuſe doth not take away the uſe no more than the *Spartans* ſhewed themſelves wiſe in rooting out their Vines, becauſe their people abuſed their Wine to drunkenneſſe.

I am ſure wee have the example of GOD Himſelfe, *who would not ſilence the patternes both of ſinne, and judgement, of thoſe hee dearely loued.* And if we be verſed in his Booke, wee may obſerve, that he hath beene pleaſed to make many uſes of ſuch

such examples. Sometimes by them hee doth threaten, *Remember what the Lord did unto Myriam. Did not Achan the sonne of Zerah commit a trespasse in the accursed thing? Wherefore doe you harden your hearts as the Ægyptians and Pharaoh?* If yee doe as they have done, yee shall bee punished as they have beene. Sometimes by them hee doth reproach unthankefull people. *Did not I deliver you from the Ægyptians and from the Amorites, from the children of Amon, and from the Philistims? O my people, remember what Balack King of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the sonne of Beor answered from Shittim to Gilgal.* Are yee not ashamed to offend such a GOD as I, who have neither beene a barren Wilderneſſe, nor a dry Land? Sometimes by them he comforteth and strengtheneth the hands of the weak.

Vses of examples.

1. *To threaten.* Deut. 24 9. Iosh. 22. 20. 1 Sam. 6. 6.

2. *To reproach.* Iudg. 10. 17.

Mic. 6. 5.

3. *To comfort.*

Deut. 3. 21. *Thine eyes have seene all that the Lord your God hath done unto these two Kings.* This your

Esa. 54. 9. trouble is *as the waters of Noah to mee: as I have said, they shall no more goe over the Earth:* so, nor your afflictions shall overwhelme you. Will you be dismaied in any trouble, or cast off your confidence, as if Gods hand were tyed up now more than in those dayes?

4. *To maintaine truth.* Iam. 2. 21, Rom. 4. 2, 3. Sometimes by them hee doth maintaine great points of godlinesse. *Was not Abraham our Father justified by Workes? Not to glory in before God: for Abraham beleeved God, and it was counted to him for righteousnesse:* but to make him stand out against the blasphemies of the world, the accusations of Conscience, and the upbraidings of a dead faith. And will not yee who must bee the children of *Abraham*, or perish, walke in the way of so worthy

thy a Father? Sometimes by them hee doth dissuade from vice. *Bee not Idolaters as were some of them: Let us not commit fornication as some of them did, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Let us not tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of Serpents. Neither murmure as some of them murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.* if yee goe on in such a way, and will not be dissuaded, yee will meet with the same plagues which they have found, or worse. Sometimes by them he gives promonition and caution. *I feare least by any meanes, as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minder should bee corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* Will yee not take heed lest lesse policy make you to fall, as *Eve* fell, which was full of bitternesse to her and hers?

5. *To dissuade from vice.* 1 Cor. 10. 7, 8, 9, &c. Exo. 32. 6. Num. 25. 9. Num. 21 6. Numb. 14. 37.

6. *To forewarne.* 2 Cor. 11. 3.

All

Why examples are of ſuch uſe. παράδειγμα. Lam. 1.23.

All this uſe and more hath our good God made of examples, not onely becauſe like leaking Veſſels we are apt daily *to runne out*, and *to forget our faſhion which we ſaw in the Glaſſe*, if it be not ſtill repreſented to us: but alſo becauſe of the ſingular profit of examples. For as they profit a world of people, they being like a burning Beacon giving light before men; and being like fire whereat we may give light to thouſands of Candles: ſo doe they laſt long and hold out to the worlds end, as the poore Widowes mites, and *Lots* Wifes tranſmutation.

A threefold benefit by examples.

Neither is it in vaine that GOD hath taken ſuch a courſe as this. It is all for our good, that wee may know how to uſe examples according to their ſeverall natures. But among the reſt you may reape a threefold benefit by them. Firſt, an *Obſervation* of the cuſtome

1. *Obſervation.*

stomes and usages of the Church and enemies of it. This will bee an adjument to wisdome, which is ordinarily attaineable by experience of our owne dayes, and memory of others. Next an *Illustration* of the faith, and manners of others, what ever they be. For examples doe not make faith and manners, but give patternes of Gods rules, for the more Expedite practise of them. And lastly, a *declaration* of Gods ordinary providence in his acts of wisedome, goodnesse, mercy, justice, and the like.

2. *Illustration*

3. *Declaration of providence.*

From these two uses the world doth, mostly, too farre wander. For want of the first, the Church is many times filled with Schismes, and disorders. For want of the second, faith and manners are not so cleared, and examples are taken up as necessary Lawes, which onely shew a lawfulnesse

The world doth not make this benefit.

neſſe where the rule of Scripture doth not oppoſe. For want of the third, God paſſeth by, and wee know it not. Let him bee never ſo wiſe, by the neglect of the example, we admire it not. Let him be never ſo good, by the neglect of the example, we love it not. Let him be never ſo mercifull, by the neglect of the example, we imbrace it not. Let him be never ſo juſt, by the neglect of the example, wee doe not feare and tremble, and avoide the rockes of ſinne: and hence it is that I have beene induced to propound theſe examples unto you alſo.

How men doe make uſe of examples of Juſtice.

It may bee that ſometimes men doe obſerve the way of GOD in the whirewind of juſtice: but either they are willing to thinke it not ſo great as it is; or to judge it to reach further than our good God intendeth it. If men do think the

firſt, it is becauſe they would flatter themſelves in like ſinnes. Loth they are to thinke that God ſhould puniſh that which they love; or that danger ſhould happen to them who have done as they meane to doe ſtill. If men judge the ſecond, it is becauſe they want charity, and judgement in the wayes of God.

And how they ſhould from the ſeveral waies of Gods ſhewing Juſtice.

Sometimes GOD gives an example of his juſtice which begins here, and continues for ever and ever: as in many of the drowned firſt world, and roaſted Sodomites. God never made mee ſo skilfull in his Throne buſineſſe, as to define peremptorily, that every luckling and infant of thoſe miſerable ones were caſt into the bottomeleſſe hell. Hee onely ſayes that the floud did ſweepe them away, and they were burned with fire and brimſtone, and there leaves us to leave

leave the rest to GOD. They were not in the Arke indeed, nor was *Iob* in the visible Church, as *Isaac* and the rest of the Patriarchs were, yet might the *All-eye* looke upon them as he pleased, and judge, or spare.

Sometimes God gives an example of his justice which dies here, and (for ought wee know) may end in glory. Thus we are said *to bee judged that wee might not bee condemned by the world.* No man will judge *Iosiah* or *Ionathan* for their untimely deaths. They died in peace, though they died in warre; in peace with God, in warre with men. Nor will they resolvedly reprobate the soules of *Er*, and *Onan*, *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, *Ananias*, and *Saphira*, or their likes. Their sins were great, and grievous, yea damnable, and therefore GOD brought fearefull judgements upon them: and as hee hath

1 Cor. 11. 32.

said,

said, so hath hee done, *bloudy and deceitfull men shall not live out halfe their dayes.* But for their soules, and how farre his justice extended to them, is among the secrets of his government, and past our cognizance. It is an old lesson never to bee forgotten, *That secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things that are revealed, to us, and to our children for ever.* Psal. 55.23. Deut. 29.29.

The Application of the use of examples to this warning-peece.

But what is all this to our examples in this Warning-peece? If you apply it aright you shall know how to use them to your good. Bee sure therefore to see Gods hand in both, and his anger against sin in both; without that, such judgings could not ordinarily come into the world. Bee sure also not to extend GODS justice further than what you see or heare. Thus farre God hath gone, goe you no further. Cannot

not GOD take up his people and whippe them soundly for sinne, but presently the rash world must cry out, *They are bastards, and not for* GODS *rest?*

Indeed you see or heare that one of them had a debauched and wicked life. God saw it, and thrust him downe to the gates of hell, and so he did fearefully judge him in this world. Yet withall hee had such remorse, confession, selfe condemnation, desire of others good, and of his owne (*though with despaire*,) that God hath given us reasons of charity to his soule, and kept the rule of certainty to himselfe onely. Notwithstanding, let no man of such a course presume; God comes as a swift witnesse against such, and will make his sword drunke with their bloud. For *hee will wound* Psal 68 21. *the hairy scalpe of every one tha;*

that goes on ſtill in wickedneſſe.

You ſee alſo, or heare, that the other of them had a great deale better life. It is true alſo, that (thus much being confeſſed) hee cloſed too long and too much with the world, as all that knew him well, complained. He was alſo unthankfull to a pariſh who had beene loving to a poore father of his (in a free gift of a good maintenance from them,) when hee would not bee perſwaded (*both before the ſetling of any Will, and before the ſetling of his laſt*) to give a poore pittance out of his great eſtate to that loving Pariſh for pious uſes, hee having no children of his owne. God ſaw this too, and whipt him to the purpoſe, before hee went hence and was no more ſeene.

Would not GOD have an irreligious world ſee how neceſſary

Dan. 4. 27.

Prov. 3. 9.

necessary it is to *breake off a wicked life by Repentance*, and how usefull to *honour* GOD *with our riches?* It would make a good mans heart to bleed, that the world should have a second floud of sinne by some, and that, by others, pious and publike workes should bee neglected, opposed and grumbled at, as if mens riches were their owne, and they might doe with them what they list, as if they were gods. Shall private persons and affaires (*not worth a dunghill to the businesses of* GOD) bee the onely object of bounty and munificence? If in such a case GOD withdraw his countenance and frowne, is it not worthy our notice? Let God bee GOD, and doe his owne worke, in sparing their soules for ever as hee pleaseth: yet let him shew us examples too of what wee ought to doe, or what

what wee ſhall ſuffer. For if wee doe not amend (for ought I know) he may, and will doe according to our patternes, take away our comforts here, and our comforts for ever and ever, which is infinitely more:

I ſhut up all in a word. Looke upon your examples and feare and tremble. If they have found GOD thus angry who have beene overtaken *by indulged, and over powring infirmities,* how will he look upon you if ye neglect, and ſcorn, after ſuch warnings? Yet look upon them ſo, as you leave not Charitie behinde. Yee may have hope to conceive well of them (*who were judged in this world,*) becauſe yee knew not their hearts. Yee can have no hope to conceive well of your ſelves in ſo doing, becauſe yee know your owne hearts better. You are apt in excuſing ſome to flatter your ſelves, and

in

in accusing others to justifie your selves too farre. Neither of these can doe well in the day of your account, which I desire may bee comfortable unto you in the day of our LORD IESUS CHRIST.

1 Cor. 10. 11. *All these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.*

FINIS.

Imprimatur.

Thomas Weekes, Cap. Domest. Epis. Lond.